

HECTOR CITY COUNCIL
Regular Meeting Monday, March 17, 2025, at 6:30pm
Hector City Hall

Meeting called to order by/time: Mayor Randy Smith at 6:30pm

Council Members:	<u>Position</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Present / Absent</u>
	Alderman 1	Mike Geurian	Present
	Alderman 2	John Mosley	Present
	Alderman 3	Peggy Gregory	Present
	Alderman 4	Phillip D'Amato	Present
	Alderman 5	Hannah D'Amato	Present

Attorney:	Clay McCall	Present
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Pledge of Allegiance

Meeting opened with prayer by: Peggy Gregory

02-17-25 Council Meeting Minutes	Reviewed & Accepted	Motion made by: Peggy Gregory Motion 2 nd by: John Mosley Vote: Passed 4 Yes / 1 No (4/1)
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February 2025 Financial Report:	Reviewed & Accepted	Motion made by: John Mosley Motion 2 nd by: Peggy Gregory Vote: Passed 100% (5/5)
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Police Department Report:	Chief Phillip Hubbard	Present
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chief Hubbard reported that the Hector Police Department has been meeting with Hector School Officers and working with them on security measures.• Aaron Culwell is now a full-time officer for the COPS Grant.		

Streets/Parks Report: HectorFest June 14th, 2025, city cleanup

- Mayor Smith discussed the city cleanup and proposed two bids.
- One bid from Haston's Recycling in the amount of \$2,500.00 for two 40-yard dumpsters. The second bid from American Dumpster Rentals in the amount of \$1,215.00 for three 20-yard dumpsters with a \$90.00 cost for delivery included in total.
- The timeline for the city cleanup will be from April 10 thru 12.
- Mayor Smith proposed Resolution 2025-07 authorizing amount of \$1,215.00 to American Dumpster Rentals to provide dumpsters for city cleanup.
- **Motion made by Peggy Gregory, motion 2nd by Hannah D'Amato to hereby: Resolution 2025-07: authorizes an appropriation from the general fund in the amount of \$1,215.00 to American Dumpster Rentals for providing dumpsters for the City of Hector's Annual Spring Cleanup.**
- **VOTE: Resolution 2025-07 passed. 100% (5/5).**

Fire Department Report	Chief Kenny Bowden	Present
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chief Bowden stated the fire department has had a good month and asked Fire member Tim Morley to report on the accomplishments that the fire department has performed since February. Handouts provided to all in attendance.		

- Fire Member Tim Morley stated there are a total of 17 fire members with 11 being fully qualified as far as ACT 833 Grant is concerned. The HVFD has hosted a Wildland Training for members of the Pope/Conway County Fire Departments and Arkansas Tech. Fire Marshall Sumners and Fire Chief Bowden has met with the Hector School and is currently working on a plan of action for emergencies that may happen at the school. HVFD has received five new pagers from OEM and is in the process of receiving radios. A sixty-gallon water tank and pump have been installed on the new side x side for assistance with grass fires. Judge Ben Cross donated two chainsaws, and someone donated a Tractor with a box blade. The quarterly calls response time has been good. The above items were some of the items mentioned in the report, for full details of the report See Exhibit A.

Public Comment

- Misty Barnett presented to council her frustration and concern on how certain council members have conducted themselves. She believes there seems to be personal agendas from what she has observed and cited several examples of how the behaviors and actions of council members have not been appropriate. She stated that they should see how their actions are being perceived and take the appropriate action to do what the community desires even if that calls for resignation. See Exhibit B for full public statement.

Old Business:

Agenda Item A: Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) Sidewalk Project

- a. Project start: April 15th
 - b. Approval of Resolution authorizing the mayor to apply for short-term financing from Chambers Bank in the amount of \$79,000.00
- Mayor Smith stated one change from the original sidewalk plan is that the sidewalk for Maple Street will now be located on the left side instead of what was originally proposed as on the right side. The other change is due to safety, an additional beacon will need to be installed. The second beacon will be installed at the crosswalk on Maple Street.
 - Street/Park Natalie Brock is contacting homeowners for a verbal agreement for the ride-away to the sidewalk to be located on the left side of Maple Street.
 - Mayor Smith presented to council where Resolution 2024-43 had gone through council and approved on December 16, 2024, council meeting for the mayor to apply for short-term financing from Chambers Bank in the amount of \$81,478.86.

Agenda Item B: HVFD Standard Operating Guidelines

- Fire Secretary Rhonda Bowden stated the SOGs will need to be amended and asked to table item until the next meeting. Fire Chief Kenny Bowden wanted to review with members.
- **Motion made by Hannah D'Amato, motion 2nd by Peggy Gregory to table item to discuss at next regular meeting.**
- **VOTE: Motion passed 100% (5/5).**

Agenda Item C: Resolution R2025-08 Procedures of the city council. There have not previously been established rules and procedures for the City of Hector.

- Resolution presented to council at 2/17/2025 meeting and council member Phillip D'Amato asked to table item to review if a previous copy existed for comparison. A handout of the resolution presented to each council member at the meeting on 2/17/2025.
- A previous copy could not be found that established rules and procedures for the City of Hector.
- Mayor Smith proposed Resolution 2025-08 to establish rules and procedures for the City of Hector.

- **Motion made by Peggy Gregory, motion 2nd by John Mosley to hereby:
Resolution 2025-08: accept Procedures of the City Council for the City of Hector, Arkansas**
- Council Member Hannah D'Amato stated she has not had time to review. The mayor stated this was to maintain efficiency and consistency for quorum, the council took a few minutes to review. The mayor asked for a vote.
- Council Hannah D'Amato stated she wanted to add a section to the resolution for the agenda, financial statement, and meeting of minutes to be sent out five days prior to the meeting to review. She was instructed that a motion had been made, and motion had been 2nd, and action needed to be made on that. Council member Phillip D'Amato asked if the resolution could be amended later, and the city attorney stated that yes this is acceptable. A motion could be made to amend the timeframe for document review and to define special/emergency meetings for Resolution 2025-8 at the next regularly scheduled council meeting. She was asked to provide those amendments to the Recorder/Treasurer before the next meeting.
- **VOTE: Resolution 2025-08 passed. 100% (5/5).**
- **Motion made by Hannah D'Amato, motion 2nd by Phillip D'Amato to provide amendments to Resolution 2025-8 to discuss at the next regularly scheduled meeting on April 21, 2025.**
- **VOTE: Motion passed 100% (5/5)**

New Business:

Agenda Item A: Amendment of Ordinance 24-1 to conform with state laws, A.C.A. 14-42-110 "Mayors in cities of the first class and second class and incorporated towns shall have the power to appoint and remove all department heads..." and to amend section 3.1, amend 3.2, strike section 4 in its entirety "and the Hector Volunteer Fire Department Advisory Board.

- Council member Phillip D'Amato requested at the regular council meeting conducted on 2/17/2025 for Ordinance 24-1 to be added to the agenda for 3/17/2025 regular council meeting to discuss updating verbiage in the ordinance to conform with state law A.C.A 14-42-110 for Mayor to appoint department heads.
- Mayor Smith proposed amended Ordinance 24-1 and the updated verbiage on mayor appointments/removals of department heads and the cleanup of other sections in the ordinance. The old and new version presented to council members.
- **Motion** made by Phillip D'Amato to table to next meeting for further review. The mayor stated a vote needed to amend or not to amend for Ordinance 24-1. No 2nd motion made.
- **Motion made by Peggy Gregory, motion 2nd by John Mosley to hereby:
AMEND Ordinance 24-1: approve amendment to conform with state law A.C.A. 14-42-110 and to approve amendments to section 3.1, 3.2, strike section in its entirety and the HVFD Advisory Board.**
- **VOTE: Amended Ordinance 24-1 not passed. 2 Yes / 3 No (2/3)**

Agenda Item B: Consideration of a Resolution for an appropriation from the General Fund in the amount of \$3000.00 to Hogwild Pyrotechnics for the city's annual HectorFest fireworks display.

- Mayor Smith proposed Resolution 2025-09 for an appropriation from the general fund to Hogwild Pyrotechnics in the amount of \$3,000.00 to present the fireworks display at HectorFest on June 14th, 2025.
- **Motion made by Peggy Gregory, motion 2nd by Mike Geurian to hereby:
Resolution 2025-09: authorizes an appropriation from the general fund in the amount of \$3,000 to Hogwild Pyrotechnics for the City of Hector's Annual Fireworks Display.**
- **VOTE: Resolution 2025-09 passed. 100% (5/5).**

City Council members review and approval of financial transactions.

Public comment from Tim Morley on clarification for the passing or not passing of Ordinance 24-1 to conform with state law A.C.A. 14-42-110. Clarification made Ordinance 24-1 not passed. He also asked about guidelines for the removal of council members, City Attorney did not wish to make a comment on the subject.

The Recorder/Treasurer reported that an expenditure paid by the city from the general fund was not an invoice that could be paid by the city. The invoice was for flowers bought for a city employee's mother's funeral. When it was recognized this was not an invoice for municipal payment, the amount reimbursed back to the city general fund. The money reimbursed back to the city general funds came from contributions from council members/city employees and fire/police departments. The total amount was \$173.92. The documentation that the general fund reimbursed appropriately is on file at City Hall.

Public comment from Misty Barnett asked if there were any updates on the investigation into the incident at the fire station. Police Chief Hubbard stated it is with the prosecutor's office and is part of a criminal investigation and could not be made public. This is regarding current internal investigation.

Public comment from Cindy Rector on who is responsible for making sure that council members behave appropriately, Mayor stated he could be notified if council members are not conducting themselves appropriately.

Meeting adjourned:

Time: 7:20pm


Motion made by: Peggy Gregory

Motion 2nd by: Phillip D'Amato

Vote: Passed 100% (5/5)

The next regularly scheduled council meeting will be held on April 21st, 2025, at 6:30pm.


Recorder/Treasurer


Mayor

By signing, I agree that pages 1-4 are true and correct copy of the meeting held by the Hector City Council on March 17, 2025.

EXHIBIT A

- HECTOR VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT (HFVD) REPORT 3-17-2025

Hector Fire Department Accomplishments

- January 31 held open interviews for members of the community to join the newly established fire department
 - February 1 added 17 new members
 - All applicants interviewed and accepted
 - All officer positions filled with highly experienced and qualified personnel
- Training
 - 4 in-house trainings
 - 1 mutual aid training with 5 local departments that we respond to calls with.
 - 2 Act 833 required trainings
 - We hosted Wildland training for members of pope county as well as Conway County and Arkansas Tech.
- Community Preparedness
 - Chief Bowden and Fire Marshall Sumners met with school officials to start planning for emergencies that may arise at the school
 - We have begun inspecting and documenting the status and location of fire hydrants.
- Community Concerns
 - No smoking in the building
 - No Alcohol consumption at the station
 - Zero tolerance for members under the influence while on scene or station property.
 - No members living in the station
- New equipment/ improvements
 - Members raised \$610 for the purchase of a tv for use in trainings.
 - Received 5 brand new pagers from OEM
 - Air packs inspected and filled

- New 60-gallon water tank and pump purchased and installed in the new side by side to be used for grass fires.
 - County Judge Ben Cross donated 2 chainsaws from the county maintenance department
 - 2 new steer tires for tanker 680
 - New hand tools and tarps from Greenbrier
 - We have signed paperwork for a new to us brush truck from Greenbrier just awaiting final inspection
 - Private donation of a tractor and box blade for station maintenance and haunted trail
 - Chris Beavers, owner of Paint Group Inc has agreed to paint the inside of the station at no cost to the city or department. His company will donate the supplies and labor.
- Quarterly Call Summary
 - January
 - 4 calls avg response time 20.5 minutes
 - February
 - 4 calls avg response time 14.5 minutes
 - March (to current)
 - 4 calls avg response time 11.125 minutes.

If you have any questions or concerns feel free to email us at hectorfiredept600@gmail.com or call Chief Kenny Bowden 479-466-3053 or Rhonda Bowden 479-280-0702.

EXHIBIT B

- PUBLIC COMMENT ON 3/17/2025 – MISTY BARNETT

Good evening, Mayor, Council members and fellow Hector citizens.

I want to begin by saying my intention is not to offend anyone and to be as politically correct as possible. I'm the type of person that what you see is what you get and will stand up for what I believe is right. So, I just want to voice my concerns regarding a few current council members. I feel like there are some members with a personal agenda instead of what is in the best interest of our community. They keep saying that "we as citizens do not know what all is going on". As a lifelong citizen of Hector, I have taken their advice and made it a point to find out what is going on and here is what I have discovered and observed. The fire department had issues/problems, and the City had to take it over and an investigation is being conducted. However, since then chaos seems to have become rampant causing a divide in our community. To be blunt, those council members questioning others actions and ethics need to take a look at their own. As a citizen, I do not want people representing me that refuse to take responsibility for their actions and questionable ethics. They seem to be more concerned in making excuses for their behavior and finding legal "loop holes" to get what they want instead of listening to the majority of the community. If they were truly concerned about what the community thought about their actions regarding the city's business then they would resign from council.

- One council member was up at the fire station in the middle of the night – which in turn resulted in an assault with a gun taking place on city property and an investigation being conducted. Council member stated at the city council meeting on January 20th that they were sure everyone heard about the incident at the fire station and that disciplinary actions had been taken on the fire department side. Was this council member the one allowed to discipline on the fire department side and who? It would seem only ethically right to me that everyone up at the fire department at that time would need to be disciplined. I'm very certain that if the council member had not been at the fire station and had it open at that inappropriate hour then the assault would have been avoided at least on city property. It makes you wonder if they were up there at that hour this time, how many other times has it happened? What about the cameras? I'm sure the footage would either verify what happened or exonerate them. Considering this has been a couple months and nothing has been done or made public, I feel it is time that something be done even if it is by us citizens. Someone needs to be held accountable. My concern is, does the council member not see what their actions caused and not feel the least bit responsible for what happened and not think they should be held accountable for that?

- One council member being considered for the mayor position did not have one person that spoke in support of them. Yet, felt the need to call out the remaining council members by name and tell them that they would be deciding who would be mayor since they and their spouse would not be voting. Yet, the council member still decided to stay on city council even though they did not have the support of the citizens or the other council members. The only support that was evident to me was that of their spouse and fellow fire department member (which are both on city council). My concern is, if the council member doesn't have the support of the citizens then why would they want to continue their position on council unless it's for personal reasons?
- One council member whose spouse was being considered for mayor, which was stated that they would not be voting. Made a motion to go into executive session and then participated in it even though it involved their spouse. Again, I am floored that it seems that this does not seem like it is ethically wrong with them.

I can honestly say, that from my perspective as a voting citizen it comes across that these three council members (and fellow fire department members) are a "clique" and a voting unit. I would argue that when these three council members are together it appears to be a "secret meeting" to the public. It would seem nearly impossible for them not to be discussing some type of city business or issues going on with the city since they are so intertwined. Something new seems to be happening every day, and it is getting exhausting for everyone.

The only good thing I can see that has come out of all these incidents and drama that seems to be surrounding them is they have made the good, faithful, remnant citizens of Hector more aware of everything and they are eager to take a stand and want to take an active role in serving and making Hector back into a place everyone is proud of.

I firmly believe that if they are concerned for Hector and the community then they would realize how they are being perceived and they would want to take the appropriate actions to do what the community wants and desires, even if that calls for resignations.

Misty Barnett – Public Comment – 3/17/25